



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

CONTACTS:

Jared Touchin, Communications Director
(928) 274-4275

Crystalyne Curley, Sr. Public Information Officer
(928) 274-2758

nnopvp.communications@gmail.com

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**Navajo leaders congratulate Diné College as officials
break ground on new math and science building in Shiprock**



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, 24th Navajo Nation Council members, and Diné College Board of Regents break ground on a new math and science building in Shiprock, N.M. on June 28, 2021.

SHIPROCK, N.M. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, 24th Navajo Nation Council members, New Mexico State Sen. Shannon Pinto, State Rep. Anthony Allison, and Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish joined Diné College President Dr. Charles Roessel and Board of Regents members on Monday, as Diné College held a groundbreaking ceremony for a new \$7.4 million math and science building in Shiprock, N.M.

The new facility will be constructed on the Shiprock campus beginning in July, and will house Diné College's math and science departments, instructional classrooms, laboratories, student common, offices, meeting rooms, and other facilities. The new facility is funded through a General Obligation Bonds package approved by New Mexico voters in 2018 and Capital Outlay funds from the state. Construction is expected to be completed in March 2022.

“On behalf of the Navajo people, I congratulate the Diné College Board of Regents, Diné College President Dr. Roessel, and the students who will benefit greatly from the new math and science center and in turn, this investment in our students will benefit our Nation for many years. This new facility will serve to develop and advance the minds of our young Navajo people who are striving for careers in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math fields. Expertise in the STEM fields is a very critical part of building our Nation and improving the quality of life for our Navajo people. I commend Diné College for empowering our students and for growing our own here on the Navajo Nation,” said President Nez, who previously taught Navajo history and government years ago at Diné College.

President Nez also highlighted the college’s success over the years and commended the board and leaders for continuing to incorporate Navajo teachings and culture in the college’s curriculum. He also added that the teachings of our elders such as T’áá Hwó Ají Téego, or self-reliance and self-determination, are important for everyone to persevere and achieve in life.

Vice President Myron Lizer said the new math and science facility will also promote community and economic development for Shiprock and surrounding communities and allow students to remain closer to home as they pursue their educational goals.

“Part of building our Nation involves developing and fostering the intellect and ingenuity of our young people to benefit our communities. We have many creative, intelligent, and motivated young people who are eager to give back to our communities and to help our people, and this new facility will be a great resource for them. According to Diné College officials, approximately 80-percent of Diné College graduates remain within their community – that is a great statistic that instills hope for our future. I commend Diné College and everyone who successfully planned and advocated for this initiative,” said Vice President Lizer.

Council Delegate Eugenia Charles Newton, who represents the Shiprock community as a member of the 24th Navajo Nation Council and Health, Education, and Human Services Committee Chair Daniel Tso and Council Delegates Paul Begay, Pernell Halona, and Edison Wauneka also spoke and offered their support for Diné College and the students.

Diné College Board of Regents President Greg Bigman, Diné College President Dr. Roessel, and Dean of STEM James Tutt also gave thanks to past and present leaders for supporting the initiative and striving to create more educational opportunities for Navajo students near their own communities on the Navajo Nation.

To create more access to higher education for Navajo students, the Nez-Lizer Administration will put forth a proposal to invest \$50 million from the Nation’s Síhasin Fund for scholarship opportunities. More information will be forthcoming.

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